



OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

TODD SPITZER

April 11, 2019

The Honorable Governor Gavin Newsom
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Victim Response to Death Penalty Moratorium

Honorable Governor Newsom:

Your blanket moratorium of the death penalty devastated hundreds of innocent crime victims and denied them of long-awaited justice. This week is National Crime Victims' Rights Week. It is a time when we as a nation remember those who have been victims of violence and honor the survivors. As a prosecutor, I have seen firsthand the utter devastation that violent crime has taken on individuals. I have also witnessed the incredible strength that victims possess in the pursuit of justice.

Steve Herr spent his son's 27th birthday praying that police would find his son's head. Sam Herr, a combat veteran, had been shot and killed by his friend and neighbor. The next day, Sam's killer dismembered his body and cut off his head, scattering the bodyparts in a park.

When Sam's father came to the morgue to identify his son's body parts, he asked the coroner to sew Sam's body back together so he could be buried in one piece. They did, except for one hand that was never found.

Ron and Bruce Harrington have spent the last 40 years searching for the man who killed their youngest brother and his wife. Keith Harrington was just 24 years old when he was bludgeoned to death. Patti Harrington was 27 years old when she was raped and then bludgeoned to death.

Their lives were just starting. Their possibilities were limitless.

But a monster walked through an unlocked door and beat those possibilities to death.

Your protection of vicious, brutal, tortuous, and sadistic murderers does not give you the moral high ground. The crime victims are the only ones entitled to moral high ground. The decision to show compassion belongs to the victims and the victims alone.

On April 8, 2019, the Orange County District Attorney's Office stood with victims of

crime and listened to their stories of the horrendous crimes perpetrated against their loved ones - and the pain they endured going through as they pursued justice.

These stories are hard to tell - and hard to listen to.

But you have not listened.

You have not listened to Steve Herr recount how he spent what should have been his son's 27th birthday praying for his son's head to be found.

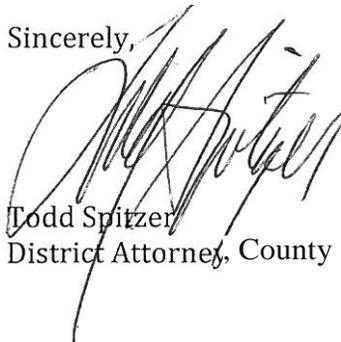
You have not listened to how Thanksgiving traditions - and the family that kept them - were shattered by the loss of the youngest Harrington brother.

For your benefit, the victim's speeches were videotaped and are being delivered to you.

Listen to the pain caused by your decision. I am requesting that you view this tape so that you have an understating of the devastation and the reopening of painful memories caused by the moratorium and denial.

Compassion should not be reserved for monsters. Compassion should be reserved for the victims.

Sincerely,



Todd Spitzer
District Attorney, County of Orange

Enclosure: 1 CD, Orange County Victims' Rights Rally